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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 002480

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: NEW DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER DESIGNATED - BERNARD
BEN BOT

Classified By: Political Counselor Mary E. Daly reasons 1.5 (b & d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On September 30, Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende asked retired career diplomat Bernard Bot to accept the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs beginning in early December, 2003. Bot declared himself most willing to accept the position. The intention is for de Hoop Scheffer to stay in office through the OSCE Ministerial December 1-2. The primary reason for choosing Bot is the need for an accomplished technocrat to run the Dutch EU presidency. Bot most recently served as the Netherlands' permanent representative at the EU between 1992 and 2002. Prior to that, he was Dutch ambassador to Turkey and to NATO, as well as Secretary General of the MFA. Privately, sources close to the Prime Minister told us that the Prime Minister insisted that foreign policy remain unchanged, especially regarding relations with the United States and Israel. Bot's interview with the Prime Minister this weekend was reportedly very long and designed to assess whether he was willing to carry out the current policy line. According to the PM's top political advisor, Balkenende was fully satisfied that Bot was strongly committed to the Atlantic partnership. The Prime Minister passed over candidates from the political class. While he would have liked CDA floor leader Maxime Verhagen in the job (the men are extremely close personally and on policy), he could not spare him from parliament. Bot's resume follows.

[1](#)2. (C) Dr. Bernard Rudolf Bot
Born November 21, 1937 in Batavia, Indonesia
Widower, three children

Education: St. Aloysius College, The Hague
Law studies, University of Leyden
Academy of International Law, The Hague,
Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Mass USA (LLM)
Doctorate in law (cum laude), University of Leyden

Career: Joined the diplomatic service of the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs October 22, 1963.

Postings: 1964 - 1970 - Brussels, Permanent Representation
of the Netherlands to the European Communities
1970 - 1973 - Buenos Aires
1973 - 1976 - (East) Berlin
1976 - 1982 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague
1982 - 1986 - Brussels, Deputy Permanent Representative of
the Netherlands to NATO
1986 - 1989 - Ankara, Ambassador
1989 - 1992 - Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
The Hague
October 1, 1992 - Brussels, Permanent Representative of the
Netherlands to the European Union
January 1, 2003 - Partner, Praaning Meines Consultancy Group

Other Positions:
Chairman, Association of the Members of the Diplomatic
Service (1978 - 1982)
Member of the Board of Governors, Fondation Journalistes en
Europe
Member of the Supervisory Board, Hotel School The Hague
Chairman of the Advisory Board, Energy Charter Secretariat
Member of the Board of Trustees of the European Centre for
Work and Society
Member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Tilburg

Publications:
Non-recognition and Treaty Relations (1968), edited by
Sijhoff and Oceana
Articles on the Common Market, European Political
co-operation, NATO and various other political matters
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